

"It's simply ridiculous that our salmon fishermen are essentially being penalized for the Administration's mishandling of the Klamath River habitat and resulting damage to the Klamath Fishery. Despite a near-total closure of this year's salmon season, they refuse to declare a federal disaster in this industry and funds to help restore the habitat were slashed," said Farr.

"I'm proud to say that today we were able to fight back and secure agreements to provide relief both to salmon fishermen and the Klamath River. As this bill makes it way through the Senate and conference negotiations, I will continue to fight for the federal aid our fishermen deserve during this difficult fishing season as well as long-term recovery efforts."

Farr and other West Coast Democrats launched their efforts during House debate over the annual spending bill for the Departments of State, Commerce and Justice. Aid for the salmon fishermen and habitat recovery would come from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, under the Department of Commerce.

During floor debate, Farr urged the Republican Chairman of the committee that wrote this bill, Rep. Frank R. Wolf (VA-10), to support long-term solutions to the problems in the Klamath Basin in order to curb greater economic losses in the future.

Wolf acknowledged Farr's leadership on this issue and committed to increasing the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund for restoration and recovery once today's bill reaches conference negotiations with the Senate.

In addition, as a result of the Democratic rebellion over this issue, Republicans accepted a "place holder" amendment to add disaster relief dollars to this bill in conference negotiations. Together, these two steps forward represent an important win for all West Coast salmon fishers and communities.